declined in 1998-99 following our nuclear tests, they recovered in 1999-2000 to A$714.5 million, an increase of 7.3%.

Fiji was discussed with Australian Foreign Minister. Both Foreign Ministers expressed the hope that the elections in Fiji would be fair and free and without violence and looked forward to Fiji returning to democracy. EAM conveyed India's concerns regarding Fiji's chronic problems of racial disharmony and landlessness of Indo-Fijian Sugarcane farmers and sought Australian support and that of the international community to resolve these issues also.

Benefits to deputationists

1288. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the deputationists in the borrowing department are being given less benefits than the parent department;

(b) if not, whether the deputationists working as lecturers in SHERUBTSE COLLEGE, KANGLONG, BHUTAN are devoid of certain benefits which they enjoy in the parent organizations, namely earned leaves (ELs) and joining time, etc; and

(c) whether lecturers on deputation are denied ELs in the said college on the pretext of availability of 83 days vacation, whereas in their parent organization they get both as in case of Delhi University, they get more than 12 days ELs in addition to 105 days vacation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) The allowances and benefits drawn by deputationists from India in Bhutan have generally been higher than the entitlements in their respective parent departments. A Composite Bhutan Compensatory Allowance which is more than the various allowances available in the parent department such as Dearness Allowance/Interim relief, City Compensatory Allowances, etc. is offered to all the deputationists in Bhutan. In addition, there are other entitlements such as free air passage, carriage of excess baggage, Outfit Allowance, etc., which are normally not available in the individual's parent department/

universities. The deputationists are also fully in the know of their entitlements prior to taking up their assignments.

(c) Lecturers on deputation to Sherubtse College have been allowed leave of 83 days under the Technical Cooperation Scheme of the Colombo Plan and this is duly extended to them during their period of deputation.

Offshore Development Centre at Hyderabad

1289. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether US-based Surgical Information Systems has opened its new Offshore Development Centre at Hyderabad recently;

(b) what services would be offered by this Centre;

(c) the number of Indians offered employment by this Centre; and

(d) the other details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) M/s SIS Software (India) Private Limited has been registered under the STP scheme with STPI, Hyderabad on 27.12.2000 for operating as an Offshore Development Centre at Hyderabad.

It is a fully owned subsidiary of Surgical Information Systems, Georgia, USA. The unit has commenced operations under the Scheme in March, 2001.

The services offered by the unit are in the urea of software activity relating to Hospital Software Development, Complete Post-Operative Information Management Software and Solutions.

The total number of Indians employed as on date is 53 (52-Technical and 1 Non-Technical). As per the projections given in their application, the anticipated total number of employees as at the end of 3rd year (2003) is 100.

(d) The unit has made investment of Rs. 50.00 lakhs for